

the patient and her doctor agree that such stay is unnecessary. Many breast cancer patients undergo some type of surgical treatment, which may involve lumpectomy or mastectomy. Breast cancer surgery is not easy, physically or emotionally. When women find themselves forced by their insurance companies to leave the hospital before they are ready—sometimes just hours after surgery—it can lead to serious complications.

I am also a sponsor of H.R. 1740, the Breast Cancer Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act (the EARLY Act), which would direct the Department of Health and Human Services to develop and implement a national educational campaign to increase awareness of the threats posed by breast cancer in young women of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Regarding research funding, I sponsored legislation that raises money for breast cancer research by giving Americans the option of purchasing a special postage stamp for 14 cents above the normal price. This small amount of money adds up and makes a difference. Since 1997, the program has raised more than \$53 million for breast cancer research.

Last year, I met two breast cancer survivors from the Kansas City area who were visiting Washington, D.C. for a reception honoring their advocacy efforts. Kim Carlos and Jennifer Johnson coauthored *Nordie's at Noon*, a book detailing their personal stories and those of others who have battled breast cancer. Their powerful message highlights the importance of spreading breast cancer education and early detection awareness to help save lives.

The University of Kansas Cancer Center houses the Breast Cancer Survivorship Center, and focuses a comprehensive attack on the disease—from education and early detection to treatment, post-operative care, and emotion support. Battling breast cancer and other forms of cancer is a lifetime fight and just because a patient's treatment concludes does not mean that the care is finished. The Center's mission is very straightforward—eliminate the burden of cancer through world-class research, drug development and delivery, prevention and survivorship, and patient care. When it comes to fighting cancer, the University of Kansas says "Game On!"

ALLOWING FUNDING FOR THE INTEROPERABLE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS GRANT PROGRAM

SPEECH OF

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 1694, the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program Extension Act of 2009.

This grant program, due to expire at the end of this year, is a vital component of a nationwide fully interoperable communications network for our first responders. It provides grants to States so they may purchase expensive, yet essential, interoperable communications equipment.

This simple, straightforward extension would assist States in establishing their portion of a

nationwide interoperable network. We cannot afford to let this program expire.

There are two primary reasons to support this bill.

First, interoperability is essential for the safety of Americans. We all know the devastating consequences that occur when our first responders and public safety entities cannot communicate in the face of incredible disaster. Tragedies such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina instantly come to mind.

Interoperability was a key recommendation of the 9/11 Commission and one of the foremost reasons Congress passed legislation to "free-up" spectrum by transitioning to digital television.

First responders need to be able to communicate effortlessly—lives depend on it.

Second, we want to ensure the communications networks established by States are thorough, effective, and efficient.

The Department of Homeland Security has set deadlines for all States to develop Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans and Congress established the grant program to help States purchase the equipment to implement these plans.

Unfortunately, the deadline for the program has not afforded States sufficient time to comply with the program requirements.

By extending the deadline for applications for this grant program, we are enabling public safety entities to do the right thing—to carefully and thoroughly design their interoperable plans before they spend millions of taxpayer dollars on equipment.

Of course, the sooner interoperable communications networks come online, the better. But we do not want to unwisely rush their implementation or effectively punish those entities that do their due diligence in the planning stages. We must extend this vital grant program.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to my colleague Rep. HARMAN who had the foresight to introduce this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support S. 1694, the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program Extension Act of 2009.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to show my support for National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

As President Obama stated in his proclamation naming October as the National Disability Employment Awareness Month, fair access to employment is a fundamental right of every American, including the 54 million people in this country living with disabilities.

Through the Ability One Program, a federal initiative, that enables people who are blind or have other significant disabilities to work and provide products and services to federal and commercial customers, thousands of working Americans are contributing to West Virginia and national economies.

The more people know about the capabilities of people with disabilities to work and lead independent lives, the more we can shatter

stereotypes and misperceptions. We need to celebrate empowering one another by highlighting the ingenuity and perseverance of people with disabilities. As a Nation, we should take this month as an opportunity to showcase the contributions of those with disabilities who have found success in the workplace.

However, there is more that needs to be done to spread the awareness that hiring people with disabilities is good for businesses in West Virginia. For example, seven out of ten working age Americans who are blind are not employed.

The month of October honors these men and women who live with disabilities and are working or want to work within their communities. I would like to take this time to shine a spotlight and raise awareness of programs in West Virginia and around the Nation that work with individuals with disabilities.

Both the American Foundation for the Blind, AFB, and the National Federation for the Blind, NFB, have chapters in Huntington and around the state where they work with individuals with disabilities to improve their lives through advocacy, education and career programs. These organizations work to educate the public on the ability of those with disabilities to succeed and thrive within employment settings. They promote independent and healthy living for people with vision loss by providing them and their families with relevant and timely resources.

Another organization working in West Virginia to educate employers about employing workers with disabilities is Goodwill Industries. They provide education, training and career services for people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. They work to train and employ contract workers to fill outsourced needs for document management, assembly, mailing, custodial work, grounds keeping and more. In 2008, local Goodwill organizations collectively provided employment and training services to more than 1.525 million individuals.

Federal initiatives such as AbilityOne Program, also help people who are blind or have other severe disabilities find employment by working for nonprofit agencies, NPAs, that sell product or services to the U.S. government. They are the largest source of employment for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities in the United States with 12 participating non-profit agencies in West Virginia.

I know employers can make a difference. Two years ago, my chief of staff became disabled after a fall in his home injured his spinal cord. He's now back at work and continues on the road to recovery with the help of accommodations I'm pleased to say the House of Representatives made for him at my request. From the Speaker and her staff, to both the Sergeant-At-Arms and the CAO's staff and to the Capitol Police and the House Staff Fitness Center—all of these offices have responded enthusiastically. From help getting his transportation past security checkpoints to getting his wheelchair into the office, from designing his workstation to accommodating his workout routine, the House answered my requests affirmatively. This month he was recognized by his state vocational rehabilitation program for his accomplishment of returning to work.

All of us face battles—many of us face more than our fair share. This month serves as a reminder of that truth. It is a truth we as a society must respect and must work to make right.

We have some strong allies in that battle as evidenced above. There is more than abundant evidence here that despite all odds against it, the human spirit is a difficult, if not impossible, flame to snuff out. Hope is but a small thing on show this day when compared to the many triumphs and remarkable victories we celebrate. The courage shown every day by those with disabilities is contagious and their successes empower all of us to be better individuals, better community members, and better Americans.

Please join with me in celebrating all of the organizations who work to raise awareness about the dedicated and hard-working Americans who are blind or have other significant disabilities who provide quality products and services at fair market prices to the Federal government every day.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD INTERIM SAFETY REC- COMMENDATIONS ACT OF 2009

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today I rise to introduce the National Transportation Safety Board Interim Safety Recommendations Act of 2009, joined by regional Members, including House Majority Leader STENY HOYER, D-MD, FRANK WOLF, R-VA, JIM MORAN, D-VA, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, D-MD, DONNA EDWARDS, D-MD, and GERALD CONNOLLY, D-VA, as original cosponsors. Our bill will clarify that the National Transportation Safety Board, NTSB, may, and should, offer interim safety recommendations to state and local transportation authorities.

On June 22, 2009, two Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, WMATA, trains collided near the Fort Totten station here in the Nation's capital. This collision was devastating for this region and for the Nation's transit systems, as nine regional residents died, seven from the Nation's capital. On Metro everyday, in the national capital region, Members of Congress and their staff and millions of other Federal employees of every rank form the majority of Metro's week day riders. Millions of tourists, people who work in every sector and school children are regular riders. The collision has had nation-wide consequences. On September 22, even before its Metro study was complete, the NTSB issued nine nation-wide safety recommendations to address concerns about the safety of train control systems that use audio frequency track circuits, like those that may have contributed to the June 22 train collision here. We believe that, in turn, low-cost, recommendations were in order that might save lives.

The NTSB has been particularly vigilant in quickly reporting defects and operational problems, to encourage remediation even before its final reports. Long before the June 22 collision, in 1996, NTSB had recommended to WMATA that it replace or retrofit its older 1970's 1000 series train cars after a train overran a station platform, striking a standing, unoccupied train, and killing the driver of the striking train. The NTSB renewed this recommendation to replace or refurbish the older cars following the roll back accident of a train

car in the Woodley Park Metro station in 2004, as it should have. The NTSB is not prohibited by statute from making interim recommendations for corrective actions, but low cost recommendations of the kind made thereafter were not made after any of the Metro accidents. This bill clarifies that the NTSB does have such authority.

While the reason for the June 22 crash has not yet been determined, it was evident that the striking car, which was an older 1000 series train car, was significantly more damaged than the struck car, which was a newer 6000 series car. In fact, all of the fatalities were from the 1000 series car. Following the collision, the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689 suggested that WMATA put the 1000 series cars between the newer, more crash-worthy 6000 series cars.

Unfortunately, without the regulatory authority established by this bill we have introduced, there have been no tests of crash worthiness either of the newer 6000 series cars or of the older 1000 series. However, the evidence from the crash suggests that 40 year old cars may be more dangerous as lead and rear cars. The NTSB did not disagree with this interim step at a Congressional hearing in July, but it never recommended this, or any other action, except action that is so costly that it will not occur.

It is a well known and frustrating fact that, for years, Metro has tried to convince Congress and the local jurisdictions to fund replacements for the old 1000 series cars and only this year, after the tragic collision, has Congress appropriated the first \$150 million of the \$1.5 billion authorized first time in 2007. The 1000 series cars were only 300 of Metro's 1,100-car fleet, but replacing those cars will cost \$600 million and take at least five years of combined federal and local area payments. Moreover, the cost of gas at the pump has so driven up Metro ridership, that it cannot simply cut its fleet by 300 cars. Congress and members of our regional delegation had been working long before the collision to get from Congress the \$1.5 billion that has now been authorized for WMATA's urgent capital and preventive maintenance needs, including new cars. While we have finally been successful in getting the first \$150 million, it will take years to fund these replacements, not to mention other problems such as the circuit signals that NTSB has already found may be implicated. Recommendations short of multimillion dollar upgrades and replacements can save lives. This bill requires the NTSB to specifically consider recommending interim recommendations where appropriate, especially when a transit agency has not secured funds to meet the costly permanent recommendations.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the House pass this bill.

HONORING BENJAMIN P. LATHROP UPON HIS RETIREMENT AS THE MAYOR OF NORWICH, CT

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mayor Benjamin P. Lathrop who is retiring after years of service to the City

of Norwich, Connecticut. I rise to recognize him on his retirement after 4 years of service as Mayor, and over a decade of service to the community as a whole.

Ben has dedicated his life to public service, and is a veteran of the Air Force who served our nation during the Vietnam War. He has served as Mayor of Norwich since 2005 and previously on the Norwich City Council from 1997, the final two terms as President Pro-Tem. A perpetually enthusiastic booster for the city, Ben's good cheer, kindness, and dedication have helped him unite the people of Norwich and set the stage for further progress in the years to come.

Ben founded both the Mayor's Cup Challenge and the Norwich Ambassador Program. He has volunteered in community groups such as the American Cancer Society and the March of Dimes, and as a mentor at the Norwich Public Schools and the Greeneville School. Ben has served on many of Norwich's boards and commissions, notably as a member of both the Greater Norwich Area and Eastern Connecticut Chambers of Commerce.

We will honor his service on November 19 with a dinner, the proceeds of which will benefit Hospice of Southeastern Connecticut and Thames Valley Council for Community Action Inc.

Ben's dedication as a citizen of Norwich, and his passion as the city's Mayor will be remembered for years to come. He truly believes in the importance of community, and wears his love for his city on his sleeve. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me and my constituents in thanking Mayor Lathrop for his service and wishing him the best in his new endeavors.

SIGNING OF THE TURKEY/ARME- NIA PROTOCOLS ON OCTOBER 10, 2009

HON. MICHAEL E. McMAHON

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. McMAHON. Madam Speaker, I rise with optimism about the latest progress towards normalization of relations between the Republics of Turkey and Armenia.

On October 10, Foreign Ministers Ahmet Davutoglu of Turkey and Edward Nalbandian of Armenia signed a notable agreement, taking both countries a step closer to establishing full diplomatic relations, opening borders and greatly enhancing economic, political and cultural cooperation.

These historic protocols are a critical measure that will bring about regional stability. There have been confidential talks for approximately a decade between the two nations, and this agreement is a testament to the willingness of Armenia and Turkey to look forward towards the common goal of open borders and normalization of relations. As a Member of NATO, and a frontline country bordering Iraq, Turkey is a critical ally of the United States. As we re-deploy our forces in Iraq, Turkey plays a key role. Turkey has been a major support of the new Iraqi government and plays a positive role of investment in Iraq and developing a civil society in Iraq. Closer relations between Turkey and Armenia will hopefully move Armenia into a more westward